

## Young People's Society

### AFRICAN MISSIONS.

Topic for Sunday, April 25: Heroes of African Missions.  
Jeremiah 1: 6-12.

#### DAILY READINGS.

Monday: The missionary's passion. 1 Cor. 9: 16-23.  
Tuesday: The missionary's danger. Ezekiel 2: 3-7.  
Wednesday: The missionary's faith. Isaiah 49: 1-5.  
Thursday: His reward. Mark 10: 28-31.  
Friday: The missionary's joy. 2 Tim. 4: 6-8.  
Saturday: The missionary's triumph. Revelation 7: 13-17.

Moffatt, Livingstone, Mackay, Hannington, Lapsley are names that will always be written high upon the roll of the heroes of African missions.

All who have gone to that land are heroes. It takes more true heroism to go there than to any other mission field. The distance, the danger, the insalubrity of climate, the character of the people are the cause.

There are many names unwritten and unheralded which deserve a high place in the heroes' roll. The quiet of their work and the unostentatiousness of their activity while obscuring from public gaze have enhanced their work and worth.

Our own church's representation in the galaxy named was Samuel Lapsley, the son of one of the best families in Alabama, who went out as one of the pioneers to the great Congo Basin, and whose life was given to the cause he loved. His death stirred the church as nothing else could have stirred it.

The companion of Lapsley was William H. Sheppard, a colored man. By his devotion, constancy and intelligence he has done more than perhaps any man in the mission to carry it to a marvelous success. He has been recognized by the learned societies of England and is a Fellow of the Royal Geographical Society of London.

Other colored workers, men and women, have gone out from our church to be messengers to their own race of the grace of God. Their work has been substantial and effective. Through them and their white co-laborers there has been gathered at Luebo, on the bank of the Kassai, the greatest congregation in numbers that is enrolled in one entire church.

The part played in African missions by our modest little institute for training a colored ministry has been most important. Founded at Tuscaloosa, Ala., by the late Dr. Chas. A. Stillman, and after his death named for him, and supported by the church in a manner far from as generous as its purpose and merit deserves, it has furnished our African Mission with some of its finest workers.

But the Africans in Africa are by no means the only ones to whom we are called to give the gospel. Millions of the same race are just around us and in many cases just as needy, as to their spiritual wants, as the people dwelling in the Congo country. The problems they make for us here are serious and perplexing. Publicists and statesmen have not found a solution. The gospel will solve them. For our own sake, then, as well as for this people's, we must try to lead them to Christ.

The work of our own Dr. J. Leighton Wilson, back in the forties, the first to go to the west coast of Africa, and the man to whom, more than to any other, the civilized world is indebted for the abolition of the slave trade, should be an incentive and inspiration to work for the colored race at home and abroad. He had the faith to lay foundations broad and strong, and to the day of his death no cause lay nearer to his heart than that of the Africans. The spirit which animated him should be perpetual in a church which honors his name and memory.

## Prayer Meeting

### TOPIC—THE UNCHANGEABLE PURPOSE.

Rom. 8: 28-32.

\* For Week Beginning April 18.

Our conception of Deity is radically defective unless, as its initiative element, there is a recognition of the divine sovereignty. A God who, in the absolute sense, is fettered in his activities and thwarted in his designs, who is liable to fail in his sublimest plans and be defeated in his most comprehensive schemes of beneficence, is not a God at all. Moreover for God to act without a plan to rule, without a definite, intelligent purpose, is unthinkable. Further, it is radically erroneous to assume that there is any part of his moral or spiritual government about which he has no intelligent plans, and which he leaves to such fate as may emerge out of chaotic conditions. He is an intelligent sovereign, "knowing the end from the beginning," because he decrees it, and doing his will in the army of heaven and among the inhabitants of earth. All efforts to evade this basal truth are futile and childish. To say that the omniscient One chooses not to know and that the omnipotent One chooses not to have a purpose is to conceive of him as forming a monstrous conspiracy against himself to imperil those beneficent ends which his infinite perfections would sanction. A God who would frustrate the highest ends by refusing to impose his benevolent purposes upon them, would be a monster.

The magnificent text before us is a comprehensive statement of God's supremacy in the execution of his eternally gracious purpose in the process of rescuing a soul from an estate of ruin and translating it to an estate of glory. Every stage of the process is the fulfillment of an unchangeable purpose in behalf of his redeemed people, and every stage is linked inseparable in plan, in order and in execution with the other stages. The glorification of a ransomed sinner is not only accomplished progressively, but this progress is according to God's eternally formed method.

"All things work together" to this end. He controls conditions, material and spiritual, earthly and celestial, temporal and eternal, in the execution of his purpose. We do not always apprehend the method nor detect the unfolding of the plan. It may be enveloped in impenetrable folds of mystery. The great general rule is that God's method and the evolving of his plans are hidden. Surely this is true in the outworking of his providential designs. But the text assures us many times, our observation confirms the assurance, that all things work together for good to the believer.

The fulfilling of God's sovereign purpose is perceived more clearly in the sovereign act of regeneration. His supremacy is such that he re-creates the spiritual nature that the body of sin may be destroyed. This fact is involved in our being foreknown and called. We are new creatures in Christ Jesus, born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, begotten unto a living hope.

His sovereign is fulfilled in our effectual calling, by virtue of which we willingly respond to and accept this offer of mercy and become subjects in his kingdom, his disciples, his servants, his friends, his followers. We become willing in the day of his power. "I will put my fear in their hearts that they may not depart from me."

In our justification God graciously and sovereignly provides the remedy for guilt, the ransom price, and according to his good pleasure, he accepts it as the ground of our being justified. The entire transaction, the laws involved, the method, are all above us and beyond us. It is all of his good pleasure and according to his gracious purpose.

The divine purpose is accomplished in that gradual refinement of the nature in holiness which we call sanctification.